

2012 Legislative Session Ends, Explore MEA's Smart Energy Investment Map, Electric Vehicle Charging Station Goes National and more...

Maryland Energy

ADMINISTRATION

Powering Maryland's Future

2012 Legislative Session Wrap Up

The 430th session of the Maryland General Assembly ended the night of April 9th with numerous clean energy and energy efficiency victories for Maryland - and one significant setback. Governor O'Malley's top energy priority, the Maryland Offshore Wind Act, passed the House of Delegates with an overwhelming vote of 88-41, yet lacked sufficient support to advance in the Senate Finance Committee. On several other fronts, however, energy bills that reflect Maryland's commitment to its leadership in the clean energy arena were enacted with MEA support.

MEABudget: For the fifth consecutive fiscal year, MEA will not receive any general revenues from state taxes for fiscal year 2013 and instead will rely entirely on "special funds," such as federal grants and the proceeds from the sale of carbon allowances under the [Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative](#). As expected with the expiration of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and declining RGGI auction proceeds, Governor O'Malley proposed an MEA budget that was almost 40% less than the prior year. The General Assembly understood the state's commitment to clean energy development in Maryland and approved Governor O'Malley's FY 2013 budget without any significant changes. However, because of the failure of the General Assembly to act upon the revenue bills associated with the FY 2013 budget's passage, questions remain regarding the future of the 2013 budget.

In addition to support for MEA's budget, the General Assembly allocated \$25 million for energy efficiency upgrades or renewables in new and/or renovated schools in Maryland. MEA also won approval to start using a portion of the funds from the recent Constellation/Exelon merger to begin the geotechnical and geophysical exploration of the outer continental shelf to advance future offshore wind development.

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MEA in the News

[House panel rejects automatic sunset of Maryland tax credit programs](#) - *The Gazette*

[Maryland House approves bill to subsidize offshore wind development](#) - *The Washington Post*

[Baltimore to host national forum on energy efficiency program design, implementation and marketing](#) - *Market Watch*

[McCormick warehouse cuts energy bill to zero](#) - *The Baltimore Sun*

[House panel approves offshore wind farm bill](#) - *The Baltimore Sun*

Below is a summary of the bills of interest that were introduced by MEA and passed the General Assembly:

SB 791/HB 1197: RPS – Solar Energy and Solar Water

Heating Standard: This bill modifies the solar ramp up schedule and will accelerate 10,000 jobs and \$3 billion in investment in this growing market. Overall, the proposed total solar share of the RPS remains at 2% in 2022; however, for each year between 2013 and 2021, the percentage of energy derived from solar sources is increased. This modification will allow for smooth and consistent growth throughout the ramp up years. The bill was strongly supported by MEA and passed with overwhelming support in the General Assembly. For more information on MEA's solar programs, please visit the [solar page of MEA's website](#).

SB 652/HB 1186: RPS – Renewable Energy Credits –

Geothermal Heating and Cooling: This bill alters the definition of Tier 1 renewable resources, as defined in [Maryland's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard](#), which includes energy generated from thermal energy avoided by the use of geothermal heating and cooling systems. To be eligible for inclusion in the RPS and therefore accrue renewable energy credits, a geothermal system must meet or exceed current Energy Star standards, replace an inefficient system whose primary fuel is electricity or non-natural gas, and does not feed electricity back into the grid. For more information on MEA's geothermal program, please visit the [geothermal page of MEA's website](#).

SB 998/HB 1279: MVA – Plug-in Vehicles- Disclosure of

Personal Information: This bill requires the MVA to disclose to electric companies information regarding residences with electric vehicles. It specifies that information disclosed may only include a description of the plug-in vehicle and the address of the owner. The information may be used for reliability planning only. For example, if a neighborhood has an abundance of electric vehicles, a utility would be alerted to make infrastructure improvements to assure that adequate power supplies are available. To find out more about MEA's clean transportation program and to find an electric vehicle charging station near you, please visit the [transportation section of MEA's website](#).

SB 997/HB 1280: Public Utilities – Electric Vehicle Users

and Charging Stations- Exclusions: This bill alters the definition of "electricity supplier" and "public service company" to clarify that electric vehicle charging stations, electric vehicle supply equipment, and charging station service companies are not entities that are like power plants or transmission lines. It

[With clean wind gone](#)
[Assembly pushes energy](#)
[from manure](#) - [The Baltimore Sun](#)

View MEA's [All Incentives](#) page to find the grants, loans, rebates, and tax credits you need to implement energy efficiency upgrades and install renewable energy systems.

The Maryland Energy Administration assists Maryland citizens and businesses save money through smart investments to obtain real results in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and conservation. MEA fuels the creation of green jobs by providing funds and resources to expand the use and availability of clean, safe energy in Maryland.

equipment, charging station service companies, and drivers using an electric vehicle charging station. To find out more about MEA's clean transportation program and to find an electric vehicle charging station near you, please visit the [transportation](#) section of MEA's website.

SB 1004: Thermal Biomass Energy: There are generally two ways to produce energy with a thermal biomass system: directly burning the biomass for fuel (thermochemical) or anaerobic digestion to convert waste solids to methane, which can then be burned to produce thermal energy. This bill defines energy from thermochemical and anaerobic digestion thermal biomass systems as a Tier 1 renewable source and as eligible for inclusion in meeting RPS. Owners of eligible systems in Maryland may receive RECs for the amount of energy generated by the system, converted from BTUs to kilowatt-hours. Visit MEA's website and learn more about [MEA's biomass program](#).

Other legislation supported by MEA, but not enacted:

HB 441/SB 237: Offshore Wind Act of 2012: Offshore wind is Maryland's most abundant renewable resource, with the potential to supply an estimated 70% of Maryland's electricity needs. This bill would have specified that an amount set by the Public Service Commission (PSC), not to exceed 2.5% of RPS, be derived from offshore wind energy each year beginning in 2017. House Bill 441 would have established a project of approximately 200 megawatts and would have included a window of maximum rate impacts for both residential and nonresidential electric customers of \$1.50 per month for an average residential customer, and 1.5% for a nonresidential customer. An offshore wind generator of a size consistent with the rate-cost caps in the bill would have had the potential to produce up to 8.5% annually of the Tier 1 RECs necessary for RPS compliance (known as ORECS). The bill passed the House but was not voted out of the Senate Finance Committee. Visit MEA's website and learn more about [offshore wind in Maryland](#).

SB 968/HB 1331: Residential Property Sales – Disclosure of Utility Consumption: Although annual energy costs are typically a larger expense than either property taxes or insurance, many buyers don't think to ask whether their prospective new home is more like a Hummer or a Prius. This bill would have required a seller of a single-family home to provide prospective buyers with information about utility consumption at the time of listing or open house of the property. Versions of the bill passed both houses but a conference committee, to reconcile the differences between the

Smart Energy Investment Map Now Online

Ever wonder how many wind installations there are in your neighborhood? Want to find electric vehicle charging stations?



Visit [MEA's interactive Smart Energy Investment Map](#), and tour MEA's renewable and energy efficiency investments in Maryland.



Electric Vehicle Charging Station Startup Powers Maryland then Goes National

In partnership with the Baltimore Electric Vehicle Initiative (BEVI), SemaConnect was one of several vendors contracted to supply 60 charging stations across Maryland. Part of the Maryland Energy Administration's Electric Vehicle Initiative Program



Low Cost Energy Efficiency Loans Available

Want to cut your organization's energy bill but don't think you can afford to upgrade your facility? MEA has low cost loans available that would save most facilities over 20%, which ensure that the monthly savings exceed the loan repayments. Eligible organizations include

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SemaConnect accelerate its development and certification, and provided the impetus it needed to grow. [Read more...](#)

non-profit or local governments and businesses interested in energy efficiency and conservation improvements. To learn more, please visit the [Lawton Loan Program](#).

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